

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 07534 161946Z

73

ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7534

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, GR

SUBJ: ANTI-AMERICANISM EBBING

1. SUMMARY. WHILE EVIDENCES OF ANTI-AMERICANISM
HAVE DIMINISHED MEASURABLY IN LAST WEEKS, POSSIBILITY
CANNOT BE EXCLUDED OF PERIODIC UPSWINGS RELATED TO SPECIFIC
EVENTS WITHIN CONTEXT OF U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS.
PRESIDENT FORD'S VETO OF AMENDMENT ON TURKISH AID
TRIGGERED ROUND OF CRITICAL PRESS COMMENT AS DID TO LESSER
EXTEND KENNEDY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON CYPRUS REFUGEE
PROBLEM AND EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN CONCERNING SECRETARY'S
ALLEGED BID TO FM MAVROS ABOUT HILL LOBBYING.
GREEK FEELINGS TOWARD U.S. ARE ALWAYS HIGHLY VOLATILE
AND CURRENTLY REPRESENT TO LARGE EXTENT PSYCHOLOGICAL
COEFFICIENT OF NATIONAL DISAPPOINTMENT OVER CYPRUS CRISIS.
ANTI-AMERICANISM IS FOCUSED TO LARGE EXTENT ON SECRETARY
KISSINGER, UNDERSCORING GREEK PREFERENCE TO PERSONALIZE
HISTORY. POLITICAL PARTIES ON LEFT AND FAR RIGHT
HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR INTENTION TO MAKE CYPRUS CRISIS
CAMPAIGN ISSUE IN NEXT MONTH'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 07534 161946Z

DESPITE APPEALS TO KEEP CYPRUS OUTSIDE PARTY BATTLE-

LINES. RECENT POLL BY ATHENS RESEARCH CENTER INDICATED ALMOST EVEN DIVISION BETWEEN THOSE WHO THOUGHT U.S./GREEK RELATIONS SHOULD IMPROVE AND THOSE WHO FAVORED STATUS QUO OR COMPLETE DISCONTINUATION. END SUMMARY.

2. ANTI-AMERICAN INCIDENTS INVOLVING CAR BURNINGS, TIRE SLASHING, ROCK THROWING AT U.S. VEHICLES, OR VERBAL ABUSE DIRECTED AT OFFICIAL PERSONNEL HAVE SUBSIDED IN RECENT WEEKS. QUESTION OF IDENTIFYING PERPETRATORS REMAINS UNRESOLVED, BUT MANY GREEKS SUSPECT BURNINGS OF OVER TWENTY-FIVE AMERICAN AUTOMOBILES PROBABLY ORGANIZED BY LEFTIST GROUP SEEKING TO ERODE U.S. POSITION IN GREECE. ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE DIMINISHED. THEODORAKIS CONCERTS EARLIER IN MONTH INVOLVING AUDIENCES OF OVER 100,000, MAINLY YOUNG PEOPLE, REVEALED ONLY TOKEN ANTI-AMERICANISM WITH CHIEF FOCUS OF CHANTING INTERNAL POLITICAL ISSUES. MOST RECENT MASS DEMONSTRATION OCTOBER 11 INVOLVING AT HEIGHT PERHAPS 5,000 LEFTIST YOUTH EXCEPT FOR BRIEF INTERLUDE OF CHANTING "CIA BETRAYAL" WAS CONCENTRATED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTIONS, EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND TRADITIONAL "BREAD, EDUCATION, AND FREEDOM."

3. RECENT POLL CONDUCTED BY NATIONAL MARKETING GROUP WHICH APPEARED OCTOBER 15 IN TA NEA SHOWED 814 OUT OF 1,000 QUERIED WHO REPRESENT CROSS-SECTION OF ATHENS POPULATION EVENLY SPLIT BETWEEN THOSE WHO FAVOR SLOW IMPROVEMENT IN U.S./GREEK RELATIONS AND THOSE WHO PREFER TO SEE RELATIONS REMAIN AS THEY ARE OR DISCONTINUED. AGE GROUP BREAKDOWN DISCLOSED THAT 40-YEAR OLDS AND OVER INDICATED HIGHEST PREFERENCE FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WHILE 45 PERCENT OF UNDER FORTY CATEGORY FAVORED COMPLETE DISCONTINUATION. HOWEVER, POLL REFLECTS ONLY LIMITED SAMPLING AND RESTRICTED GEOGRAPHIC AREA SO ITS ACCURACY IS QUESTIONABLE AS REFLECTION GREEK PUBLIC OPINION IN BROADER SCOPE.

4. PRESS COMMENTARY TOOK SHARP DOWNSWING THIS WEEK OCCASIONED BY PRESIDENT FORD'S VETO OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION TERMINATING MILITARY AID TO TURKEY. HEADLINES
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PAGE 03 ATHENS 07534 161946Z

REPORTED PRESIDENT'S ACTION-- "VETO FROM FORD FOR THE BENEFIT OF TURKEY AND NATO," "FORD HAS SHOWN HIS FACE-- FILOTURK." EDITORIALS BITTERLY CHARGED U.S. WITH PURSUING POLICY OF MOCKERY AND HYPOCRISY AND PRESIDENT FORD WITH CRIMINAL ACT IN EXERCISING VETO. NEWSPAPERS ALSO CARRIED AS PRIORITY ITEM SUMMARIES OF LAST WEEK'S EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN CONCERNING SECRETARY'S ALLEGED SUGGESTION TO FM MAVROS TO ENCOURAGE PHILHELLENES IN

CONGRESS TO VOTE AGAINST ROSENTHAL AMENDMENT. SENATOR KENNEDY'S SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON CYPRUS REFUGEES AS REPLAYED FROM LESLIE GELB'S NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ALSO RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE PRESS PLAY. CYRUS SULZBERGER'S SERIES ON GREECE AND DER SPIEGEL ARTICLE ON ALLEGED CIA ACTIVITIES IN GREECE HAVE FUELED TO LESSER EXTENT ANTI-AMERICAN REPORTAGE. IN SUM, GREEK PRESS CONTINUES TO USE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLOIT MATERIAL WHICH PORTRAYS USG AND ITS POLICIES IN UNFAVORABLE LIGHT, PROBABLY MORE OFTEN IN HOPE OF INCREASING READERSHIP AS OUT OF CONVICTION. GREEKS AS AVID AND NOT TOO DISCRIMINATING NEWSPAPER READERS TEND TO ADJUST ATTITUDES QUICKLY TO WHAT THEY READ IN THE PRESS. THUS AS IMPORTANT LOCAL OPINION MOLDER NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF U.S. IN PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAS NOT BEEN CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENT IN U.S./GREEK RELATIONS.

5. WHILE ANY FORECAST OF EXTENT TO WHICH ANTI-AMERICANISM AS SUCH WILL BECOME CAMPAIGN ISSUE WOULD BE PREMATURE, IT IS ONLY PRUDENT TO ASSUME THAT GREEK FRUSTRATION OVER CYPRUS DEVELOPMENTS WILL KEEP IT ALIVE. DESPITE PRESIDENT CLERIDES APPEAL OCTOBER 15 TO KEEP CYPRUS CAUSE AT "PAN-NATIONAL LEVEL," LEFTIST POLITICAL PARTIES, KKE AND PASOK, AND FAR RIGHT NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION HAVE ALREADY CHALLENGED GOG'S HANDLING OF CYPRUS CRISIS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO POSE EVEN TOUGHER QUESTIONS AS CAMPAIGN PROGRESSES. ANDREAS PAPANDREOU'S CEASELESS HARPING ON CIA CONSPIRACY AND NEED FOR GREECE TO ACQUIRE "INDEPENDENT" FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE ECHOED BY OTHER PASOK CANDIDATES AS WELL AS THOSE FROM UNITED LEFT. QUESTION OF U.S. FACILITIES AND BASES IN GREECE MAY ALSO BE SEIZED UPON BY LIBERAL/LEFT CANDIDATES. AT SAME TIME PM CARAMANLIS AND HIS NEW DEMOCRACY CANDIDATES ARE NOT LIKELY. DURING CAMPAIGN PERIOD TO TAKE ON STRAIGHTFORWARD
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PAGE 04 ATHENS 07534 161946Z

DEFENSE OF MUTUAL CHARACTER OF U.S.-GREEK SECURITY INTERESTS IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. AT SAME TIME, WE WOULD EXPECT PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO EXCLUDE ANTI-AMERICAN THEMES FROM CAMPAIGN SINCE CARAMANLIS IS WELL AWARE OF SELF-DEFEATING NATURE OF ANY SUCH TACTICS OVER LONGER TERM, AS WELL AS IN RELATION TO CYPRUS.
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